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THE

# MERCHANT OF VENICE.

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A Comedy.

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,  
89, STRAND, LONDON.

## MERCHANT OF VENICE.

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### Characters.

*Copy of the Bill of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane,  
on Wednesday, January 26, 1814.*

DUKE OF VENICE ..... MR. R. PHILLIPS.

ANTONIO ..... MR. POWELL.

BASSANIO ..... MR. RAE.

SALANIO ... MR. I. WALLACE.      SALARINO ... MR. CROOKE.

GRATIANO ..... MR. WRENCH.

LORENZO ..... MR. PHILIPPS,

*With the Songs, "To keep my gentle Jessy," (composed by Dr. Arne),  
and "Softly rise, O southern breeze, (by Dr. Boyce).*

SHYLOCK ..... MR. KEAN,

*(From the Theatre Royal, Exeter—his first appearance at this  
Theatre.)*

LAUNCELOT ..... MR. OXBERRY.

TUBAL ... MR. MADDOCKS.      BALTHAZAR ... MR. BUXTON.

GOBBO ..... MR. WEWITZER.

PORTIA ..... MISS SMITH.

NERISSA ..... MRS. HARLOWE.

JESSICA ..... MRS. BLAND,

*With the Song, "Haste, Lorenzo," (composed by Dr. Arne.)*

*In Act III. a Duett, by MRS. BLAND and MR. PHILIPPS (composed  
by Mr. Shaw.)*

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### Costumes.

*(From CHARLES KNIGHT'S "Shakespeare.")*

The dresses of the most civilised nations of Europe have at all periods borne a strong resemblance to each other: the various fashions having been generally invented amongst the southern, and gradually adopted by the northern ones. Some slight distinctions, however, have always remained to characterise, more or less particularly, the country of which the wearer was a native; and the Republic of Venice, perhaps, differed more than any other State in the habits of its nobles, magistrates, and merchants, from the universal fashion of that quarter of the globe in which it was situate.

To commence with the chief officer of the Republic:—The Doge, like the Pope, appears to have worn different habits on different

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occasions. Cæsar Vecellio describes at some length the alterations made in the ducal dress by several princes, from the close of the twelfth century down to that of the sixteenth, the period of the action of the play before us; at which time the materials of which it was usually composed were cloth of silver, cloth of gold, and crimson velvet, the cap always corresponding in colour with the robe and mantle. On the days sacred to the Holy Virgin, the Doge always appeared entirely in white. Coryat, who travelled in 1608, says, in his 'Crudities,' "The fifth day of August, being Friday

. . . . I saw the Duke in some of his richest ornaments. . . . He himself then wore two very rich robes, or long garments, the uppermost was white cloth of silver, with great massy buttons of gold; the other cloth of silver also, but adorned with many curious works made in colours with needlework." Howell, in his 'Survey of the Signorie of Venice,' Lond. 1651, after telling us that the Duke "always goes clad in silk and purple," observes, that "sometimes he shows himself to the public in a robe of cloth of gold, and a white mantle; he hath his head covered with a thin coif, and on his forehead he wears a crimson kind of mitre, with a gold border, and behind it turns up in form of a horn: on his shoulders he carries ermine skins to the middle, which is still a badge of the Consul's habit; on his feet he wears embroidered sandals,\* tied with gold buttons, and about his middle a most rich belt, embroidered with costly jewels, in so much, that the habit of the Duke, when at festivals he shows himself in the highest state, is valued at about 100,000 crowns."

The chiefs of the Council of Ten, who were three in number, wore "red gowns with long sleeves, either of cloth, camlet, or damask, according to the weather, with a flap of the same colour over their left shoulders, red stockings, and slippers." The rest of the Ten, according to Coryat, wore black camlet gowns with marvellous long sleeves, that reach almost down to the ground.

The "clarissimoes" generally wore gowns of black cloth faced with black taffata, with a flap of black cloth, edged with taffata, over the left shoulder; and "all these gowned men," says the same author, "do wear marvellous little black caps of felt, without any brims at all, and very diminutive falling bands, no ruffs at all, which are so shallow, that I have seen many of them not above a little inch deep." The colour of their under garments was also generally black, and consisted of "a slender doublet made close to the body, without much quilting or bombast, and long hose plain, without those new-fangled curiosities and ridiculous superfluities of panes, pleats, and other light toys used with us Englishmen. Yet," he continues, "they make it of costly stuff, well beseeeming gentlemen and eminent persons of their places, as of the best taffatas and satins that Christendom doth yield, which are fairly garnished also with lace of the best sort. The Knights of St. Mark, or of the Order of the Glorious Virgin, &c., were distinguished by wearing red apparel under their black gowns." "Young lovers," says Vecellio, "wear generally a doublet and breeches of satin, tabby, or other silk, cut

\* Vecellio, a much better authority, says *slippers*.

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or slashed in the form of crosses or stars, through which slashes is seen the lining of coloured taffata: gold buttons, a lace ruff, a bonnet of rich velvet or silk with an ornamental band, a silk cloak, and silk stockings, Spanish morocco shoes, a flower in one hand, and their gloves and handkerchief in the other." This habit, he tells us, was worn by many of the nobility, as well of Venice as of other Italian cities, especially by the young men before they put on the gown with the sleeves, "a comito," which was generally in their eighteenth or twentieth year.

Vecellio also furnishes us with the dress of a doctor of laws, the habit in which Portia defends Antonio. The upper robe was of black damask cloth, velvet, or silk, according to the weather. The under one of black silk with a silk sash, the ends of which hang down to the middle of the leg; the stockings of black cloth or velvet; the cap of rich velvet or silk.

And now to speak of the dress of the principal character of this play. Great difference of opinion has existed, and much ink been shed, upon this subject, as it seems to us very needlessly. If a work, written and published by Venetians in their own city, at the particular period when this play was composed, is not sufficient authority, we know not what can be considered such. Vecellio expressly informs us that the Jews differed in nothing, as far as regarded dress, from Venetians of the same professions, whether merchants, artisans, &c., with the exception of a *yellow bonnet*, which they were *compelled to wear by order of the government*. Can anything be more distinct and satisfactory? In opposition to this positive assertion of a Venetian writing upon the actual subject of dress we have the statement of Saint Didier, who, in his 'Historie de Venise,' says that the Jews of Venice wore *scarlet hats lined with black taffata*, and a notification in Hakluyt's 'Voyages' (p. 179, edit. 1598), that in the year 1581 the Jews wore *red caps* for distinction's sake. We remember also to have met somewhere with a story, apparently in confirmation of this latter statement, that the colour was changed from *red* to *yellow*, in consequence of a Jew having been accidentally taken for a cardinal! But besides that, neither of the two last-mentioned works are to be compared with Vecellio's, in respect of what may be termed Venetian costume, it is not likely that scarlet, a sacred colour among Catholics generally and appropriated particularly by the Venetian knights and principal magistrates, would be selected for a badge of degradation, or rather infamous distinction. Now yellow, on the contrary, has always been in Europe a mark of disgrace. Tenne (*i. e.* orange) was considered by many heralds as *stainant*. The Jews, in England, wore yellow caps of a peculiar shape, as early as the reign of Richard I.; and Lord Verulam, in his 'Essay on Usury,' speaking of the witty invectives that men have made against usury, states one of them to be that "usurers should have *orange-tawny bonnets*, because they do *Judaize*."

As late, also, as the year 1825, an order was issued by the Pope that "the Jews should wear a *yellow* covering on their hats, and the women a *yellow* riband on the breast, under the pain of severe

penalties."—*Vide Examiner*, Sunday Newspaper, Nov. 20, 1825. The which order there can be little doubt, from the evidence before us, was the re-enforcement of the old edict, latterly disregarded by the Jews of Italy. It is not impossible that "the orange-tawny bonnet" might have been worn of so deep a colour by some of the Hebrew population as to have been described as red by a careless observer, or that some Venetian Jews, in fact, did venture to wear red caps or bonnets in defiance of the statute, and thereby misled the traveller or historian. We cannot, however, imagine that a doubt can exist of the propriety of Shylock wearing a yellow, or at all events, an orange-coloured, cap, of the same form as the black one of the Christian Venetian Merchants. Shakspeare makes Shylock speak of "his Jewish gaberdine;" but, independently of Vecellio's assurance, that no difference existed between the dress of the Jewish and Christian merchants save the yellow bonnet aforesaid, the word gaberdine conveys to us no precise form of garment, its description being different in nearly every dictionary, foreign or English. In German it is called a rock or frock, a mantle, coat, petticoat, gown, or cloak. In Italian, "*palandrano*," or "great-coat," and "*gavardina*, a peasant's jacket." The French have only "*gaban*" and "*gabardine*,"—cloaks for rainy weather. In Spanish, "*gabardina*" is rendered a sort of cassock with close-buttoned sleeves. In English, a shepherd's coarse frock or coat.

Speaking of the ladies of Venice, Coryat says, "Most of these women, when they walk abroad, especially to church, are veiled with long veils, whereof some do reach almost to the ground behind. These veils are either black, or white, or yellowish. The black, either wives or widows do wear; the white, maids, and so the yellowish also, but they wear more white than yellowish. It is the custom of these maids, when they walk the streets, to cover their faces with their veils, the stuff being so thin and slight, that they may easily look through it, for it is made of a pretty slender silk, and very finely curled.....Now, whereas I said that only maids do wear white veils, I mean these white silk curled veils, which (as they told me) none do wear but maids. But other white veils wives do much wear, such as are made in Holland, whereof the greatest part is handsomely edged with great and very fair bonelace."

The account in Howell's 'Survey' differs slightly from Coryat's, but Vecellio confirms the latter, and states that courtezans wore black veils, in imitation of women of character.

Jewish females, Vecellio says, were distinguished from Christian women by their being "*highly painted*," and wearing *yellow* veils, but that in other respects their dresses were perfectly similar. We must not forget to mention that singular portion of a Venetian lady's costume at this period, "the chioppine." This monstrosity is mentioned in the second act of Hamlet.

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ANTONIO.—Black cloth gown, with buttons down the front, and black long mantle with sleeves, both trimmed with black velvet;

black stockings, black round cap of felt; black girdle, pouch, and purse.

BASSANIO (*his second dress of richer quality*), GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO.—Doublets, trunks, and hose of various materials, swords, and a black gown with long sleeves worn over the under dress—this, with the small black cap, was the general and distinguishing costume of the Venetian nobility and gentry.

SHYLOCK.—Black gown and mantle, yellow cap.

OLD GOBBO.—Blue tunic, brown trunks, leather gaiters and shoes, small drab cloak, round broad-brimmed hat.

LAUNCELOT.—*First Dress*: Brown stuff jerkin and short trowsers. *Second Dress*: Doublet and trunks.

PORTIA.—*First Dress*: Rich embroidered satin with long sleeves, velvet body, feather fan. *Second Dress*: Doctor of Laws. *Third Dress*: Same as first.

NERISSA.—Plain satin, with velvet body, veil. *Second Dress*: Black cloth shirt and cloak, small round hat. *Third Dress*: Same as at first.

JESSICA.—*First Dress*: Plain stuff double dress, yellow veil. *Second Dress*: Black gown over boy's dress. *Third Dress*: Satin—similar to Nerissa's.

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### Characters appear.

ANTONIO.—at pages 7, 15, 39, 44, 65.

SALARINO.—7, 24, 27, 29, 39, 44.

SOLANIO.—7, 24, 27, 29, 37, 44, 47, 48.

VENETIANS.—7, 44, 60.

BASSANIO.—8, 14, 21, (*change*) 33, 44, 60.

GRATIANO.—8, 23, 24, 27, 33, 44, 48, 57, 60.

LORENZO.—8, 24, 28, 37, 41, 43, 58.

PORTIA.—12, 33, 41, (*change*) 48, 57, (*change*) 59.

NERISSA.—12, 33, 41, (*change*) 47, 57, (*change*) 59.

BALTHAZAR.—14, 33, 41.

SHYLOCK.—14, 26, 30, 39, 45.

LAUNCELOT.—19, 24, 25, 26, (*change*) 42, 59.

OLD GOBBO.—20.

LEONARDO.—21.

STEPHANO.—21, 58.

JESSICA.—24, 26, 28, (*change*) 37, 41, 42, 58.

TUBAL.—31.

MUSICIANS.—33, 59.

PAGES.—33.

GAOLER.—39.

DUKE.—44.

NOBLES.—44.



*Act I*

THE  
MERCHANT OF VENICE.

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ACT I

SCENE I.—Venice. A Street.

ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SOLANIO, and Groups discovered.

ANTO. (*advancing c.*) In sooth, I know not why I am so sad;  
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;  
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,  
What stuff 't is made of, whereof it is born,  
I am to learn;  
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,  
That I have much ado to know myself.

SALAR. (L.) Your mind is tossing on the ocean;  
There, where your argosies with portly sail,  
Like signiors and rich burghers of the flood,  
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,  
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,  
That curt'sy to them, do them reverence,  
As they fly by them with their woven wings,

SOLAN. (R.) Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,  
The better part of my affections would  
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still  
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind;  
Peering in maps, for ports, and piers and roads;  
And every object that might make me fear  
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt,  
Would make me sad.

*The Groups disperse and exeunt, R. and L.*

SALAR. My wind, cooling my broth,  
Would blow me to an ague when I thought

What harm a wind too great might do at sea.  
 I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,  
 But I should think of shallows and of flats;  
 And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,  
 Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs,  
 To kiss her burial. Shall I have the thought  
 To think on this; and shall I lack the thought  
 That such a thing, bechanc'd, would make me sad?  
 But tell not me: I know Antonio  
 Is sad to think upon his merchandize.

ANTO. (c.) Believe me, no; I thank my fortune for it,  
 My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,  
 Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate  
 Upon the fortune of this present year:  
 Therefore my merchandize makes me not sad.

SALAR. Why, then you are in love.

ANTO.

Fie, fie!

SALAR. Not in love neither? Then let us say, you are sad  
 Because you are not merry: and 't were as easy  
 For you to laugh, and leap, and say you are merry,  
 Because you are not sad.

SOLAN. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,  
 Gratiano, and Lorenzo: Fare you well;  
 We leave you now with better company. (*going*)

SALAR. I would have stay'd till I had made you merry,  
 (*crosses behind to R.*)

If worthier friends had not prevented me.

ANTO. (c.) Your worth is very dear in my regard.  
 I take it, your own business calls on you,  
 And you embrace the occasion to depart.

*Enter BASSANIO, who crosses to ANTONIO, GRATIANO and  
 LORENZO, L. 1 E.*

SALAR. Good morrow, my good lords.

BASS. (R. C.) Good signiors both, when shall we laugh?  
 Say, when?

You grow exceeding strange: Must it be so?

SALAR. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

*Exeunt SALARINO and SOLANIO, R. 1 E.*

LOREN. (L.) My lord Bassanio, since you have found  
 Antonio,



We two leave you; but at dinner-time

I pray you have in mind where we must meet.

BASS. (R.) I will not fail you. (*they go up together*)

GRATI. (L. C.) You look not well, signior Antonio;

You have too much respect upon the world:

They lose it that do buy it with much care.

Believe me, you are marvellously chang'd.

ANTO. (C.) I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;

A stage, where every man must a play a part,

And mine a sad one.

GRATI. Let me play the Fool:

With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;

And let my liver rather heat with wine,

Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.

Why should a man whose blood is warm within

Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?

Sleep when he wakes? and creep into the jaundice

By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio,—

I love thee, and it is my love that speaks;—

There are a sort of men, whose visages

Do cream and mantle like a standing pond;

And do a wilful stillness entertain,

With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion

Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;

As who should say, "I am sir Oracle,

And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!"

O, my Antonio, I do know of these,

That therefore only are reputed wise

For saying nothing; who, I am very sure

If they should speak, would almost damn those ears

Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.

I'll tell thee more of this another time:

But fish not with this melancholy bait.

For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.

Come, good Lorenzo: (*crosses to R.*)

Fare ye well, a while;

I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

LOREN. Well, we will leave you then till dinner-time:

I must be one of these same dumb wise men,

For Gratiano never lets me speak.

GRATI. Well, keep me company but two years more,

Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

ANTO. (L.) Farewell: I'll grow a talker for this gear.

GRATI. Thanks, i' faith; for silence is only commendable  
In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.

*Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO,* E.

ANTO. (L. C.) Is that anything now?

BASS. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice: His reasons are two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you shall seek all day ere you find them and when you have them they are not worth the search.

ANTO. Well; tell me now, what lady is this same

To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,

That you to-day promis'd to tell me of?

BASS. 'T is not unknown to you, Antonio,  
How much I have disabled mine estate,  
By something showing a more swelling port  
Than my faint means would grant continuance:  
Nor do I now make moan to be abridg'd  
From such a noble rate; but my chief care  
Is to come fairly off from the great debts  
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,  
Hath left me gag'd: To you, Antonio,  
I owe the most in money and in love.  
And from your love I have a warranty  
To unburthen all my plots and purposes,  
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

ANTO. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;

And if it stand, as you yourself still do,

Within the eye of honour, be assur'd

My purse, my person, my extremest means,

Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

BASS. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft  
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight  
The self-same way, with more advised watch  
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both  
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,  
Because what follows is pure innocence.  
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,  
That which I owe is lost: but if you please

To shoot another arrow that self way  
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,  
As I will watch the aim, or to find both  
Or bring your latter hazard back again,  
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

ANTO. You know me well ; and herein spend but time,  
To wind about my love with circumstance ;  
And, out of doubt, you do me now more wrong  
In making question of my uttermost,  
Than if you had made waste of all I have.  
Then do but say to me what I should do,  
That in your knowledge may by me be done,  
And I am prest unto it : therefore speak.

BASSAN. In Belmont is a lady richly left,  
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,  
Of wond'rous virtues. Sometimes from her eyes  
I did receive fair speechless messages :  
Her name is Portia ; nothing undervalued  
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.  
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth ;  
For the four winds blow in from every coast  
Renowned suitors : and her sunny locks  
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece ;  
Which makes her seat of Belmont, Colchos' strand,  
And many Jasons come in quest of her.  
O, my Antonio ! had I but the means  
To hold a rival place with one of them,  
I have a mind presages me such thrift,  
That I should questionless be fortunate.

ANTO. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea ;  
Neither have I money, nor commodity  
To raise a present sum : therefore go forth,  
Try what my credit can in Venice do ;  
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,  
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.  
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,  
Where money is ; and I no question make,  
To have it of my trust, and for my sake.

*Exeunt* ANTONIO, L. ; BASSANIO, R.



SCENE II.—Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.Enter PORTIA and NERISSA, R. 1 E.

PORTIA. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is a-weary of this great world.

NERIS. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: And yet for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing:—It is no small happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean; superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

PORTIA. Good sentences, and well pronounced.

NERIS. They would be better, if well followed.

PORTIA. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of twenty to follow mine own teaching. ~~The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple.~~ But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband:—O me, the word choose! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

NERIS. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations; therefore, the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead, (whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you) will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

PORTIA. I pray thee, overname them; and as thou namest them I will describe them; and according to my description level at my affection.

NERIS. First, there is the Neapolitan Prince.



PORTIA. Ay, that's a colt, indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself: I am much afraid my lady his mother played false with a smith.

NERIS. Then is there the County Palatine.

PORTIA. He doth nothing but frown; ~~as who should say,~~  
~~"An you will not have me, choose:"~~ he hears merry tales, and smiles not. I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth, than to either of these. *X<sup>o</sup> B-*  
 Oh, defend me from these two!

NERIS. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur le Bon?

PORTIA. Heaven made him, and therefore let him pass for a man!

NERIS. How like you the young German, the duke of Saxony's nephew?

PORTIA. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst he is little better than a beast: an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him. *X<sup>o</sup> L-*

NERIS. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will if you should refuse to accept him.

PORTIA. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket: for, if the devil be within, and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. ~~X I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge.~~ *X<sup>o</sup> B-*

NERIS. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these ords; they have acquainted me with their determinations: which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit; unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the askets.

PORTIA. If I live to be as old as Sibylla I will die as haste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my ather's will: I am glad this parcel of wooers are so

reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I wish them a fair departure.

NERIS. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferret?

PORTIA. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

NERIS. True, madam; he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

PORTIA. I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

*Enter a SERVANT, L. 1 E.*

SERV. The four strangers seek you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the prince, his master, will be here to-night.

PORTIA. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

*Exit SERVANT, L.*

Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

*Exeunt, L.*

SCENE III.—*Venice. A Public Place.*

*Enter SHYLOCK and BASSANIO, R. 2 E.*

SHYLOCK. Three thousand ducats,—well.

BASS. Ay, sir, for three months.

SHYLOCK. For three months,—well.

BASS. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

SHYLOCK. Antonio shall become bound,—well.

BASS. May you stead me? Will you pleasure me Shall I know your answer?

SHYLOCK. Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound.

BASS. Your answer to that.

SHYLOCK. Antonio is a good man.

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BASS. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

SHYLOCK. Oh, no, no, no, no;—my meaning in saying he is a good man is, to have you understand me that he is sufficient: yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies, I understand moreover upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England; and other ventures he hath squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves; I mean, pirates; and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks: the man is, notwithstanding, sufficient;—three thousand ducats;—I think I may take his bond.

BASS. Be assured you may.

SHYLOCK. I will be assured I may; and that I may be assured I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

BASS. If it please you to dine with us.

SHYLOCK. Yes, to smell pork! to eat of the habitation which your prophet, the Nazarite, conjured the devil into! I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

*Enter ANTONIO, L. 1 E.*

BASS. This is Signior Antonio. (*goes up to meet him, L.*)

SHYLOCK. (*aside*) How like a fawning publican he looks!

I hate him for he is a Christian:

But more, for that, in low simplicity,

He lends out money gratis, and brings down

The rate of usance here with us in Venice.

If I can catch him once upon the hip,

I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.

He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,

Even there where merchants most do congregate,

On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,

Which he calls interest: Cursed be my tribe

If I forgive him!

BASS. (*advancing*) Shylock, do you hear?

SHYLOCK. I am debating of my present store:

And by the near guess of my memory,



I cannot instantly raise up the gross  
Of full three thousand ducats: What of that?  
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,  
Will furnish me: But soft: How many months  
Do you desire? Rest you fair, good signior:

(to ANTONIO)

Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

ANTO. (*crosses c.*) Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow,  
By taking, nor by giving of excess,  
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friends,  
I'll break a custom:—Is he yet possess'd  
How much you would?

SHYLOCK. (R.) Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

ANTO. And for three months.

SHYLOCK. I had forgot,—three months, you told me so.  
Well then, your bond; and, let me see. But hear you:  
Methought you said, you neither lend nor borrow,  
Upon advantage.

ANTO. I do never use it.

SHYLOCK. When Jacob graz'd his uncle Laban's sheep,  
This Jacob from our holy Abraham was  
(As his wise mother wrought in his behalf)  
The third possessor;—ay, he was the third.

ANTO. And what of him? did he take interest?

SHYLOCK. No, not take interest; not, as you would say,  
Directly interest; mark what Jacob did.  
When Laban and himself were compromis'd  
That all the eanlings which were streak'd and pied  
Should fall, as Jacob's hire;  
The skilful shepherd peel'd me certain wands,  
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,  
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes;  
Who then conceiving, did in eaning-time  
Fall particolour'd lambs, and those were Jacob's.  
This was a way to thrive, and he was bless'd;  
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

ANTO. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob serv'd for;  
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,  
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.  
Was this inserted to make interest good?  
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?



SHYLOCK. I cannot tell ; I make it breed as fast.  
But note me, signior.

ANTO. Mark you this, Bassanio,  
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.  
An evil soul producing holy witness  
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek ;  
A goodly apple rotten at the heart ;  
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath !

SHYLOCK. Three thousand ducats—'tis a good round sum.  
Three months from twelve, then let me see the rate.

ANTO. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you ?

SHYLOCK. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft  
In the Rialto you have rated me  
About my moneys and my usances :  
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug ;  
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe :  
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,  
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,  
And all for use of that which is mine own.  
Well, then, it now appears you need my help :  
Go to then ; you come to me, and you say,  
"Shylock, we would have moneys." You say so,  
You that did void your rheum upon my beard,  
And foot me, as you spurn a stranger cur  
Over your threshold ; moneys is your suit.  
What should I say to you ? Should I not say  
"Hath a dog money ? is it possible  
A cur can lend three thousand ducats ?" or  
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,  
With 'bated breath, and whispering humbleness,  
Say this,—  
"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last ;  
You spurn'd me such a day ; another time  
You call'd me dog ; and for these courtesies  
I'll lend you thus much moneys ?"

ANTO. I am as like to call thee so again,  
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.  
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not  
As to thy friends ; (for when did friendship take  
A breed of barren metal of his friend ?)  
But lend it rather to thine enemy ;

Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face  
Exact the penalties.

SHYLOCK. Why, look you, how you storm !  
I would be friends with you, and have your love ;  
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with ;  
Supply your present wants, and take no doit  
Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me :  
This is kind I offer.

BASS. (L.) This were kindness.

SHYLOCK. (R.) This kindness will I show :  
Go with me to a notary : seal me there  
Your single bond ; and, in a merry sport,  
If you repay me not on such a day,  
In such a place, such sum or sums, as are  
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit  
Be nominated for an equal pound  
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken  
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

ANTO. (C.) Content, in faith ; I'll seal to such a bond,  
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

BASS. You shall not seal to such a bond for me ;  
I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

ANTO. Why, fear not, man ; I will not forfeit it ;  
Within these two months, that's a month before  
This bond expires, I do expect return  
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

SHYLOCK. O father Abraham, what these Christians are,  
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect  
The thoughts of others ! Pray you, tell me this ;  
If he should break his day, what should I gain  
By the exaction of the forfeiture ?  
A pound of man's flesh taken from a man,  
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,  
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,  
To buy his favour I extend this friendship ;  
If he will take it, so ; if not adieu ;  
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

ANTO. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

SHYLOCK. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's ;  
Give him direction for this merry bond,  
And I will go and purse the ducats straight ;

See to my house, left in the fearful guard  
Of an unthrifty knave; and presently  
I will be with you.

*Exit, R. 1 E.*

ANTO. Hie thee, gentle Jew.

This Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.

BASS. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

ANTO. Come on, in this there can be no dismay,  
My ships come home a month before the day.

*Exeunt, L. 1 E.*

END OF ACT I.

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— ACT II. —

— SCENE I.—*A Street in Venice.* —

*Enter LAUNCELOT GOBBO, L.*

LAUN. Certainly, my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master: the fiend is at my elbow; and tempts me, saying to me, "Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot, or good Gobbo, or good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away." My conscience says, "No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo;" or, as aforesaid, "honest Launcelot Gobbo! do not run; scorn running with thy heels." Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack; "via!" says the fiend; "away!" says the fiend; "for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind," says the fiend, "and run." Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, "My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,"—or rather an honest woman's son;—for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste;—well, my conscience says, "Launcelot, budge not;" "budge," says the fiend; "budge not," says my conscience. "Conscience," says I "you counsel well." "Fiend," says I, "you counsel well." To be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew, my master, who, heaven bless the mark! is a kind of devil; and to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil

himself: certainly, the Jew is the very devil incarnation, and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew; the fiend gives the more friendly counsel! I will run;—fiend, my heels are at your commandment, I will run.

GOBBO. (*without, R.*) Master—young man—you—I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

LAUN. O heavens, this is my true begotten father, who being more than sand blind, high gravel blind, knows me not. I will try confusions with him.

*Enter OLD GOBBO, with a basket, R.*

GOBBO. Master—young gentleman—I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

LAUN. Turn up on your right hand, at the next turning, but at the next turning of all, on your left: marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

GOB. 'Twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, or no?

LAUN. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? (*aside*) Mark me now: now will I raise the waters:—Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

GOB. No master, sir, but a poor man's son; his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, heaven be thanked, well to live.

LAUN. Well, let his father be what he will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

GOB. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

LAUN. *Ergo*, Master Launcelot;—talk not of Master Launcelot, father: for the young gentleman (according to fates and destinies, and such odd sayings, the sisters three, and such branches of learning,) is, indeed, deceased; or, as you would say, in plain terms, gone to heaven.

GOB. Marry, heaven forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

LAUN. (*aside*) Do I look like a cudgel, or a hovel-post, a staff, or a prop?—Do you know me, father?

GOB. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy (Heaven rest his soul!) alive, or dead?



LAUN. Do you not know me, father?

GOB. Alack, sir, I am sand blind, I know you not.

LAUN. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son.—*(falls on his knees)*—Give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long, a man's son may; but, in the end, truth will out.

GOB. Pray you, sir, stand up: I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

LAUN. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

GOB. I cannot think you are my son.

LAUN. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and, I am sure, Margery, your wife, is my mother.

GOB. Her name is Margery, indeed. I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipp'd might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my thill-horse has on his tail. *(rises)*

LAUN. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward; I am sure he had more hair on his tail, than I have on my face, when I last saw him.

GOB. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present.

LAUN. Give him a present! give him a halter: I am famish'd in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come; give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries; if I serve not him, I will run as far Heaven has any ground:—O, rare fortune! here come the man;—to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

*Enter BASSANIO, with LEONARDO and STEPHANO, R.*

BASS. You may do so;—See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making; and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging.

*Exit STEPHANO, R.*

LAUN. To him, father

GOB. (L. C.) Heaven bless your worship!

BASS. Gramercy; wouldst thou aught with me?

GOB. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy——

LAUN. (L.) Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man: that would sir, as my father shall specify——

GOB. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve——

LAUN. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew; and I have a desire, as my father shall specify——

GOB. His master and he (saving your worship's reverence) are scarce cater-cousins.

LAUN. To be brief, the very truth is, that the Jew having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being I hope an old man, shall frutify unto you——

GOB. I have here a dish of doves, that I would bestow upon your worship; and my suit is——

LAUN. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

BASS. One speak for both;—what would you?

LAUN. Serve you, sir.

GOB. This is the very defect of the matter, sir.

BASS. I know thee well, thou hast obtained thy suit.

Shylock, thy master, spoke with me this day,  
And hath preferr'd thee; if it be preferment,  
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become  
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

LAUN. The old proverb is very well parted between my master, Shylock, and you, sir; you have the grace of heaven, sir, and he hath enough.

BASS. Thou speakst it well: go, father, with thy son:—

Take leave of thy old master, and enquire

My lodging out.—Give him a livery (to LEONARDO)

More guarded than his fellows: see it done.

(BASSANIO retires up the stage with LEONARDO)

LAUN. Father, in:—(crosses to L.) I cannot get a service, no;—I have ne'er a tongue in my head. Well, (looking on his palm) if any man in Italy have a fairer table, which doth offer to swear upon a book. I shall have good fortune; go to, here's a simple line of life! here's a small trifle of wives; alas, fifteen wives is nothing: eleven widows, and nine

maids, is a simple coming-in for one man: and then, to 'scape drowning thrice; and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed; here are simple 'scapes! Well if Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench, for this gear. Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

*Exeunt* LAUNCELOT and OLD GOBBO, L.

BASS. (*advancing with* LEONARDO) I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this;

These things being brought, and orderly bestow'd,  
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night  
My best esteem'd acquaintance; hie thee, go.

*Enter* GRATIANO, R.

GRATI. Where is your master?

LEON. Yonder, sir, he walks.

*Exit* LEONARDO, R.

GRATI. Signior Bassanio.—

BASS. Gratiano!

GRATI. I have a suit to you.

BASS. You have obtain'd it.

GRATI. You must not deny me; I must go with you to Belmont.

BASS. Why then, you must:—but hear thee, Gratiano:

Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice;  
Parts, that become thee happily enough,  
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;  
But where thou art not known, why, there they show  
Something too liberal;—pray thee, take pain  
To allay with some cold drops of modesty  
Thy skipping spirit; lest, through thy wild behaviour,  
I be misconstru'd in the place I go to,  
And lose my hopes.

GRATI. Signior Bassanio, hear me:

If I do not put on a sober habit,  
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,  
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely;  
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes  
Thus with my hat, and sigh, and say, Amen;  
Use all the observance of civility,  
Like one well studied in a sad ostent  
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

BASS. Well, we shall see your bearing.

GRATI. Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not gauge me  
By what we do to-night.

BASS. No, that were pity;  
I would entreat you rather to put on  
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends  
That purpose merriment: but fare you well,  
I have some business.

GRATI. And I must to Lorenzo, and the rest;  
But we will visit you at supper-time.

*Exeunt BASSANIO, L.—GRATIANO, R.*

SCENE II.—*Shylock's House.*

*Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT, R.*

JESS. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so;  
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,  
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness:  
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee.  
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see  
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:  
Give him this letter; (*gives letter*) do it secretly,  
And so farewell! I would not have my father  
See me talk with thee,

LAUN. Adieu!—tears exhibit my tongue.—

Most beautiful Pagan,—most sweet Jew! (*crosses*)  
If a Christian did not play the knave, and get thee, I am  
much deceiv'd: but, adieu! these foolish drops do some-  
what drown my manly spirit; adieu! *Exit, L.*

JESS. Farewell, good Launcelot.—

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me,  
To be asham'd to be my father's child!  
But, though I am a daughter to his blood,  
I am not to his manners: O, Lorenzo,  
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife;  
Become a Christian, and thy loving wife. *Exit, R.*

SCENE III.—*A Street in Venice.*

*Enter SALARINO, SOLANIO, GRATIANO, and LORENZO, R.*

LOREN. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time;  
Disguise us at my lodging, and return  
All in an hour.



GRATI. We have not made good preparation.

SALAR. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.

SOLAN. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly ordered;  
And better, in my mind, not undertook.

LOREN. 'Tis now but four o'clock; we have two hours to  
furnish us:—

*Enter LAUNCELOT, L.*

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

LAUN. An it shall please you to break up this, it shall  
seem to signify. (*gives LORENZO a letter*)

LOREN. I know the hand: in faith, 'tis a fair hand;  
And whiter than the paper it writ on  
Is the fair hand that writ.

GRATI. (*to the others, up stage*) Love news, in faith.

LAUN. By your leave, sir. (*goes, L.*)

LOREN. Whither goest thou?

LAUN. Marry sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup  
to-night with my new master the Christian,

LOREN. Hold here, take this: (*giving money*) Tell gentle  
Jessica I will not fail her; speak it privately, go.

Gentlemen, *Exit LAUNCELOT, L.*

Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?

I am provided of a torch-bearer.

SOLAN. Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.

SALAR. And so will I

LOREN. Meet me and Gratiano,

At Gratiano's lodging, some hour hence.

SALAR. 'Tis good we do so.

*Exeunt SALARINO and SOLANIO, L.*

GRATI. (L. C.) Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

LOREN. (R. C.) I must needs tell thee all: she hath directed  
How I shall take her from her father's house;  
What gold and jewels she is furnished with.—

[What page's suit, she hath in readiness.]

If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,

It will be for his gentle daughter's sake;

And never dare misfortune cross her foot,

Unless she do it under this excuse,—

That she is issue to a faithless Jew.

[Sometimes omitted.]

Come, go with me ; peruse this as thou goest.  
 Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer. *Exeunt, R.*

SCENE IV.—*Outside of Shylock's House.*

SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT enter from door in F.

SHYLOCK. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge  
 The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio :—  
 What, Jessica! (*calls*) Thou shalt not gormandize,  
 As thou hast done with me ;—What, Jessica! (*calls*)  
 And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out ;—  
 Why, Jessica, I say! (*calls*)

LAUN. (L.) Why, Jessica! (*calls*)

SHYLOCK. Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.

LAUN. Your worship was wont to tell me, I could do  
 nothing without bidding.

*Enter JESSICA, from door in F.*

JESS. (R. C.) Call you? What is your will?

SHYLOCK. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica ;  
 There are my keys :—but wherefore should I go ?  
 I am not bid for love ; they flatter me :  
 But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon  
 The prodigal Christian.—Jessica, my girl,  
 Look to my house :—I am right loth to go ;  
 There is some ill a brewing towards my rest,  
 For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

LAUN. I beseech you, sir, go: my young master doth  
 expect your reproach.

SHYLOCK. So do I his.

LAUN. And they have conspired together,—I will not  
 say, you shall see a masque: but if you do, then it was  
 not for nothing that my nose fell a bleeding on Black  
 Monday last, at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that  
 year on Ash Wednesday was four year in the afternoon.

SHYLOCK. What! are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:  
 Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum,  
 And the vile squeaking of the wry-neck'd fife,  
 Clamber not you up to the casements then,  
 Nor thrust your head into the public street,  
 To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces :

But stop my house's ears, I mean, my casements;  
 Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter  
 My sober house.—By Jacob's staff, I swear,  
 I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:  
 But I will go.—Go you before me, sirrah;  
 Say, I will come. *Goes into the house.*

LAUN. I will go before, sir.—

Mistress, look out at window, for all this;  
 There will come a Christian by,  
 Will be worth a Jewess' eye. *Exit, R.*

SHYLOCK. (*returns*) What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

JESS. His words were, "Farewell, mistress!" nothing else.

SHYLOCK. The patch is kind enough; but a huge feeder,  
 Snail slow in profit, and he sleeps by day  
 More than the wild cat: drones hive not with me;  
 Therefore I part with him; and part with him  
 To one that I would have him help to waste  
 His borrow'd purse. Well, Jessica, go in;  
 Perhaps I will return immediately;  
 Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:—  
 "Fast bind, fast find!"

A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. *Exit, R.*

JESS. Farewell! and if my fortune be not crost,  
 I have a father, you a daughter, lost.

*Song.—JESSICA.\**

Haste, Lorenzo, haste away,  
 To my longing arms repair;  
 With impatience I shall die;  
 Come, and ease thy Jessy's care:  
 Let me then, in wanton play,  
 Sigh and gaze my soul away.

*Exit into house.*

*Enter GRATIANO, SALARINO, and SOLANIO, masqued, L.*

GRATI. This is the pent-house, (R.) under which Lorenzo  
 Desired us to make stand.

SOLAN. His hour is almost past.

GRATI. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,  
 For lovers ever run before the clock.

\* Often omitted.

SALAR. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly  
To seal Love's bonds new made, than they are wont  
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

GRATI. That ever hold: who riseth from a feast,  
With that keen appetite that he sits down?  
Where is the horse that doth untread again  
His tedious measures with the unbated fire  
That he did pace them first? All things that are,  
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.  
How like a younger, or a prodigal,  
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,  
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!  
How like a prodigal doth she return;  
With over-weathered ribs, and ragged sails,  
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!

*Enter LORENZO, masqued, L.*

SALAR. Here comes Lorenzo;—more of this hereafter,

LOREN. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;  
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:  
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,  
I'll watch as long for you then.—Approach;  
Here dwells my father Jew.—Ho! who's within?

*Song.—LORENZO.\**

My bliss too long my bride denies;  
Apace the wasting summer flies;  
Nor yet the wintry blasts I fear,  
Nor storms nor night shall keep me here.  
What may for strength with steel compare?  
O, Love has fetters stronger far!  
By bolts of steel are limbs confin'd  
But cruel love enchains the mind.  
No longer then perplex thy breast,  
When thoughts torment, the first are best  
'Tis mad to go, 'tis death to stay,  
Away, my Jessy, haste away!

*JESSICA at the window.*

JESS. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,

Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

LOREN. Lorenzo, and thy love.

\* Often omitted.



JESS. Lorenzo, certain; and my love indeed;  
 For who love I so much? and now who knows,  
 But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?  
 LOREN. Heaven, and thy thoughts, are witness that thou art.  
 JESS. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.  
 I am glad 'tis night, do not look on me,  
 For I am much asham'd of my exchange:  
 But love is blind, and lovers cannot see  
 The pretty follies that themselves commit;  
 For if they could, Cupid himself would blush  
 To see me thus transformed to a boy.

LOREN. But come at once;  
 For the close night doth play the runaway,  
 And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.  
 JESS. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself  
 With some more ducats, and be with you straight.  
*Exit from window.*

GRAT. Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.

LOREN. Beshrew me, but I love her heartily;  
 For she is wise, if I can judge of her;  
 And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;  
 And true she is, as she hath prov'd herself:  
 And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,  
 Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

*Enter JESSICA, disguised, L.*

What art thou come? On, gentlemen, away!  
 Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

*Exeunt, L.*

*END OF ACT II.*

### ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Street in Venice

*Enter SALARINO and SOLANIO, L.*

SOLAN. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail;  
 With him is Gratiano gone along;  
 And in their ship, I am sure, Lorenzo is not.  
 SALAR. The villain Jew with outcries rais'd the Duke,  
 Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

SOLAN. He came too late, the ship was under sail :  
 But there the Duke was given to understand,  
 That in a gondola were seen together  
 Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica :  
 Besides, Antonio certified the Duke,  
 They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

SALAR. I never heard a passion so confus'd,  
 So strange, outrageous, and so variable,  
 As the dog Jew did utter in the streets :  
 "My daughter!—O, my ducats!—O, my daughter!—  
 Fled with a Christian!—O, my Christian ducats!—  
 Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!"  
 Let good Antonio look he keep his day,  
 Or he shall pay for this.

SOLAN. Marry, well remember'd :—

I reasoned with a Frenchman yesterday; who told me th  
 Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wreck'd on the narro  
 seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a ver  
 dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcasses of many a te  
 ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip report be an hone  
 woman of her word.

SALAR. I would she were as lying a gossip in that  
 ever knapt ginger, or made her neighbours believe s  
 wept for the death of a third husband; but it is true th  
 the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,—O, that I had  
 title good enough to keep his name company!

SOLAN. Come, the full stop.

SALAR. Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

SOLAN. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

SALAR. Let me say Amen betimes, lest the devil cro  
 thy prayer; for here he comes, in the likeness of a Je

*Enter SHYLOCK, L.*

How now, Shylock; what news among the merchants?

SHYLOCK. You knew, none so well, none so well as yo  
 of my daughter's flight. (*crosses to C.*)

SOLAN. (L.C.) That's certain; I, for my part, knew t  
 tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

SALAR. (R.) And Shylock, for his own part, knew t  
 bird was fledg'd; and then it is the complexion of th  
 all to leave the dam.

SHYLOCK. She is damn'd for it.

SOLAN. That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

SHYLOCK. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

SOLAN. Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it at these years?

SALAR. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea, or no?

SHYLOCK. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that used to come so smug upon the mart;—let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy: let him look to his bond. (*crosses to L.*)

SOLAN. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh; what's that good for?

SHYLOCK. To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. (*crosses to C.*) He hath disgrac'd me, and hinder'd me of half a million; laugh'd at my losses, mock'd at my gains, scorn'd my nation, thwarted my bargains, cool'd my friends, heated my enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?—fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, heal'd by the same means, warm'd and cool'd by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed?—if you tickle us, do we not laugh?—if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? revenge! If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? why, revenge. (*crosses to R.*) The villany, you teach me, I will execute! and it shall go hard, but I will better the instruction.

SALAR. Here comes another of the tribe; a third cannot be match'd, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

*Exeunt SOLANIO and SALARINO, L.*

*Enter TUBAL, R.*

SHYLOCK. How, now, Tubal; what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

TUBAL. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

SHYLOCK. Why there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now:—two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! Would she were hears'd at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them?—Why, so:—and I know not what's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge; nor no ill luck stirring, but what lights o' my shoulders; no sighs, but o' my breathing; no tears, but o' my shedding!

TUBAL. Yes, other men have ill luck too; Antonio, as I heard in Genoa——

SHYLOCK. What, what, what! ill luck, ill luck?

TUBAL. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis?

SHYLOCK. I thank God, I thank God! Is it true? is it true?

TUBAL. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

SHYLOCK. I thank thee, good Tubal! Good news, good news—ha, ha! Where? in Genoa?

TUBAL. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night, fourscore ducats.

SHYLOCK. Thou stick'st a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

TUBAL. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

SHYLOCK. I am very glad of it: I'll plague him; I'll torture him; I am glad of it.

TUBAL. One of them showed me a ring, that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

SHYLOCK. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah, when I was a bachelor; I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys. *(crosses to L.)*

TUBAL. But Antonio is certainly undone.



SHYLOCK. Nay, that's true, that's very true: go, Tubal, fee me an officer, bespeak him a fortnight before: I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandize I will: Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

*Exeunt* SHYLOCK, L.; TUBAL, R.

SCENE II.—*Portia's House at Belmont.*

~~The three caskets of gold, silver, and lead, are set out.~~  
 PORTIA, BASSANIO, L.; NERISSA, GRATIANO, R.; SINGERS,  
 MUSICIANS, PAGES, and other ATTENDANTS discovered.

BASS. I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things.  
 First, never to unfold to any one  
 Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail  
 Of the right casket, never in my life  
 To woo a maid in way of marriage; last,  
 If I do fail in fortune of my choice,  
 Immediately to leave you and begone.

PORTIA. To these injunctions every one doth swear,  
 That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

BASS. And so have I address'd me. Fortune now  
 To my heart's hope!

PORTIA. I pray you, tarry; pause a day or two  
 Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,  
 I lose your company; therefore, forbear a while;  
 There's something tells me, but it is not love,  
 I would not lose you: and you know yourself,  
 Hate counsels not in such a quality.  
 I could teach you  
 How too choose right, but then I am forsworn;  
 So will I never be: so may you miss me:  
 But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,  
 That I had been forsworn.  
 I speak too long: but 'tis to peize the time;  
 To eke it, and to draw it out in length,  
 To stay you from election.

BASS. Let me choose  
 For, as I am, I live upon the rack.  
 Come, let me to my fortune and the caskets.

**PORTIA.** Away then : I am lock'd in one of them ;  
 If you do love me, you will find me out.  
 Nerissa, and the rest, stand all aloof. (*they retire*)  
 Let music sound while he doth make his choice;  
 Then if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,  
 Fading in music : ~~that the comparison~~  
~~May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream~~  
~~And wat'ry death-bed for him.~~

(*Music whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to himself, it then ceases*)

**BASS.** Some good direct my judgment !

Let me see—gold, silver, and base lead.

(*takes up the gold casket from c. and reads the inscription on it*)

"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire."  
 That may be meant

Of the fool multitude, that choose by show ;

The world is still deceiv'd with ornament.

In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,

But, being season'd with a gracious voice,

Obscures the show of evil ? In religion,

What damn'd error, but some sober brow

Will bless it, and approve it with a text,

Hiding the grossness with fair ornament ?

Thus ornament is but the guiling shore

To a most dang'rous sea ; the beauteous scarf

Veiling an Indian beauty.—

Therefore, thou gaudy gold,

Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee.

(*replaces the casket, and takes up the silver one from L. C.*)

"Who chooseth me, shall get as much as he deserves."

And well said too ; for who shall go about

To cozen fortune, and be honourable

Without the stamp of merit ?

O, that estates, degrees, and offices,

Were not deriv'd corruptly ! and that clear honour

Were purchas'd by the merit of the wearer !

How many then should cover, that stand bare ?

How many be commanded, that command ?

And how much honour

Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times,

To be new varnish'd?—"Much as he deserves"—  
I'll not assume desert.—

*(puts down the silver casket, and reads the lead one, L. C.)*

"Who chooseth me, must give and hazard all he hath."  
I'll none of thee, thou pale and common drudge  
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,  
Which rather threat'nest, than dost promise aught,  
Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence,  
And here choose I; Joy be the consequence!

*(places his right hand on the leaden casket)*

PORTIA. *(aside, L.)* How all the other passions fleet to air!

~~As doubtful thought, as rash embrac'd despair  
And shudd'ring fear, and green-ey'd jealousy.~~

O, Love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy;  
In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess;  
I feel too much thy blessing; make it less,  
For fear I surfeit!

BASS. *(opening the leaden casket)* What find I here!

Fair Portia's counterfeit? Here is the scroll,  
The continent and summary of my fortune:—

*(advances c. and reads)*

"You that choose not by the view,  
"Chance as fair, and choose as true,  
"Since this fortune falls to you,  
"Be content and seek no new.  
"If you be well pleas'd with this,  
"And hold your fortune for your bliss,  
"Turn you where your lady is,  
"And claim her with a loving kiss."

A gentle scroll;—Fair lady, by your leave;

I come by note, to give, and to receive;

Yet doubtful whether what I say be true,

Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you. *(kissing her)*

PORTIA. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,

Such as I am; though for myself alone,

I would not be ambitious in my wish,

To wish myself much better; yet, for you,

I would be trebled twenty times myself;

A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times

More rich;

That only to stand high on your account,  
 I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,  
 Exceed account. But now I was the lord  
 Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,  
 Queen o'er myself: and even now, but now,  
 This house, these servants, and this same myself,  
 Are yours, my lord; I give them with this ring;  
 Which when you part from, lose, or give away,  
 Let it presage the ruin of your love,  
 And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

BASS. Madam, you have bereft me of all words,  
 Only my blood speaks to you in my veins:  
 But when this ring  
 Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence;  
 O, then be bold to say, Bassanio's dead.

NERIS. (R. C.) My lord and lady, it is now our time,  
 That have stood by, and seen our wishes prosper,  
 To cry, good joy! Good joy, my lord and lady!

GRATI. (R.) My lord Bassanio, and my gentle lady,  
 I wish you all the joy that you can wish;  
 For, I am sure, you can wish none from me:  
 And, when your honours mean to solemnize  
 The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you  
 Even at that time I may be married too.

BASS. With all heart, so thou canst get a wife.

GRATI. I thank your lordship; you have got me one.  
 My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:  
 You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;  
 You lov'd, I lov'd; for intermission  
 No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.  
 Your fortune stood upon the caskets there;  
 And so did mine too, as the matter falls:  
 For wooing here, until I sweat again;  
 And swearing, till my very roof was dry  
 With oaths of love: at last—if promise last—  
 I got a promise of this fair one here,  
 To have her love, provided that your fortune  
 Achiev'd her mistress.

PORTIA.

Is this true, Nerissa?

NERIS. Madam, it is, so you stand pleas'd withal.

BASS. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?



GRATI. Yes, 'faith, my lord.

BASS. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.

(BASSANIO and PORTIA retire up the stage)

GRATI. We'll play with them, the first boy, for a thousand ducats.

But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?

What, and my old Venetian friend, Solanio?

*Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and SOLANIO, L.*

BASS. Lorenzo, and Solanio, welcome hither;  
If that the youth of my new interest here  
Have power to bid you welcome:—by your leave,  
I bid my very friends and countrymen,  
Sweet Portia, welcome.

PORTIA. So do I, my lord;  
They are entirely welcome.

LOREN. I thank your honour;—for my part, my lord,  
My purpose was not to have seen you here;  
But meeting with Solanio by the way,  
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,  
To come with him along.

SOLAN. I did, my lord,  
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio  
Commends him to you. (*gives BASSANIO a letter; all  
retire but BASSANIO and SOLANIO*)

BASS. (c.) Ere I ope his letter,  
I pray you tell me how my good friend doth.

SOLAN. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;  
Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there  
Will show you his estate.

GRATI. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.  
Your hand, Solanio; what's the news from Venice?  
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?  
I know he will be glad of our success;  
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

SOLAN. Would you had won the fleece that he hath lost!  
(*they retire up the stage*)

PORTIA. (R.) There are some shrewd contents in yon same  
paper,

That steal the colour from Bassanio's cheek:  
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world

Could turn so much the constitution  
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse !

*(going to him)*

With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,  
And I must freely have the half of anything  
That this same paper brings you.

BASS.

O, sweet Portia,

Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words  
That ever blotted paper ! Gentle lady,  
When I did first impart my love to you,  
I freely told you, all the wealth I had  
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;  
And then I told you true : and yet, dear lady,  
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see  
How much I was a braggart : when I told you  
My state was nothing, I should then have told you  
That I was worse than nothing ; for, indeed,  
I have engag'd myself to a dear friend,  
Engag'd my friend to his mere enemy,  
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady ;  
The paper, as the body of my friend,  
And every word in it a gaping wound,  
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Solanio ? (SOLANIO  
advances, L.)

Have all his ventures fail'd ? What, not one hit ?  
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England ?  
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch  
Of merchant-marring rocks ?

SOLAN.

Not one, my lord.

Besides, it should appear, that if he had  
The present money to discharge the Jew,  
He would not take it : never did I know  
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,  
So keen and greedy to confound a man :  
He plies the Duke at morning and at night ;  
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,  
If they deny him justice. Twenty merchants,  
The duke himself, and the magnificoes,  
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him ;  
But none can drive him from the envious plea  
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

**PORTIA.** Is it your dear friend, that is thus in trouble?

**BASS.** The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,  
The best condition'd and unwearied spirit  
In doing courtesies; and one in whom  
The ancient Roman honour more appears,  
Than any that draws breath in Italy

**PORTIA.** What sum owes he the Jew?

**BASS.** For me, three thousand ducats.

**PORTIA.** What, no more?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;  
Double six thousand, and then treble that,  
Before a friend of this description  
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.  
First, go with me to church, and call me wife;  
And then away to Venice to your friend;  
For never shall you lie by Portia's side  
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold  
To pay the petty debt twenty times over:  
When it is done, bring your true friend along:  
My maid Nerissa, and myself, meantime,  
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!  
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day.  
But let me hear the letter of your friend.—

**BASS.** (*reads*) "Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and me, if I might but see you at my death: notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter."

**PORTIA.** O love, despatch all business, and be gone.

**BASS.** Since I have your good leave to go away,  
I will make haste: but, 'till I come again,  
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,  
No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.

*Exit Bassanio*  
Exeunt. I.

SCENE III.—*A Street in Venice.*

*Enter SHYLOCK, ANTONIO, SALARINO, and the GAOLER, L.*

**SHYLOCK.** Gaoler, look to him;—tell not me of mercy;—

This is the fool that lent out money gratis:—  
Gaoler, look to him.

ANTO. Hear me yet, good Shylock.

SHYLOCK. I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond;  
I have sworn an oath, that I will have my bond;  
Thou call'd'st me dog, before thou hadst a cause;  
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:  
The duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,  
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond  
To come abroad with him at his request.

ANTO. I pray thee, hear me speak.

SHYLOCK. I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:  
I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.  
I'll not be made a soft and dull-ey'd fool,  
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield  
To Christian intercessors. Follow not:  
I'll have no speaking; I will have my bond.

*Exit, R.*

SALAR. It is the most impenetrable cur  
That ever kept with men.

ANTO. Let him alone;  
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.  
He seeks my life; his reason well I know;  
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures  
Many that have at times made moan to me;  
Therefore he hates me.

SALAR. I am sure the Duke  
Will never grant his forfeiture to hold.

ANTO. The Duke cannot deny the course of law;  
For the commodity that strangers have  
With us in Venice, if it be denied,  
Will much impeach the justice of the state;  
Since that the trade and profit of the city  
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go:  
These griefs and losses have so 'bated me,  
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh  
To-morrow to my bloody creditor. (*crosses to L.*)  
Well, Gaoler, on! Pray heav'n Bassanio come  
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not.

*Exeunt, L.*



SCENE IV.—*Portia's House at Belmont*

*Enter* LORENZO, JESSICA, PORTIA, NERISSA, & BALTHAZAR, R.

LOREN. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,  
You have a noble and a true conceit  
Of god-like amity; which appears most strongly  
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.  
But, if you knew to whom you show this honor,  
How true a gentleman you send relief,  
How dear a lover of my lord your husband;  
I know you would be prouder of the work,  
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

PORTIA. I never did repent me doing good,  
Nor shall not now.  
This comes too near the praising of myself;  
Therefore no more of it: hear other things:  
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands  
The husbandry and manage of my house.  
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,  
I have toward heaven breath'd a secret vow,  
To live in prayer and contemplation,  
Only attended by Nerissa here,  
Until her husband and my lord's return:  
There is a monastery two miles off,  
And there we will abide. I do desire you  
Not to deny this imposition;  
The which my love, and some necessity,  
Now lays upon you.

LOREN. Madam, with all my heart;  
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

PORTIA. My people do already know my mind,  
And will acknowledge you and Jessica  
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.  
So fare you well till we shall meet again.

LOREN. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you.

JESS. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

PORTIA. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleas'd  
To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.

*Exeunt* JESSICA and LORENZO, R.

Now, Balthazar, (*BALTHAZAR advances, R.*)  
As I have ever found thee honest, true,

So let me find thee still : take this same letter,  
 And use thou all the endeavour of a man  
 In speed to Padua ; see thou render this  
 Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario :  
 And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,  
 Bring them, I pray thee, with imagin'd speed  
 Unto the tranect, to the common ferry  
 Which trades to Venice : waste no time in words,  
 But get thee gone ; I shall be there before thee.

BAL. Madam, I go with all convenient speed. *Exit, L.*

~~PORTIA~~ Come on, Nerissa ; I have work in hand  
 That you yet know not of : we'll see our husbands  
 Before they think of us ?

NERIS. Shall they see us ?

~~PORTIA~~ They shall, Nerissa ;  
 But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device  
 When I am in my coach, which stays for us  
 At the park gate ; and therefore haste away,  
 For we must measure twenty miles to-day.

*Exeunt, L.*

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SCENE V. *The Garden at Belmont.*

*Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT, R.*

LAUN. Yes, truly : for look you, the sins of the father  
 are to be laid upon the children ; therefore, I promise you,  
 I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I  
 speak my agitation of the matter :—therefore be of good  
 cheer ; for, truly, I think—you are damned. There is but  
 one hope in it that can do you any good ; and that is but  
 a kind of bastard hope neither.

JESS. And what hope is that, I pray thee ?

LAUN. Marry, you may partly hope you are not the  
 Jew's daughter.

JESS. That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed : so the  
 sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

LAUN. Truly then I fear you are damn'd both by father  
 and mother : thus, when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall  
 into Charybdis, your mother : well, you are gone both ways.

JESS. I shall be saved by my husband ; he hath made  
 me a Christian.

LAUN. Truly, the more to blame he : we were Christians enough before ; e'en as many as could well live one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs ; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

JESS. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say ; here he comes. (*crosses to L.*)

*Enter* LORENZO, L.

LOREN. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

JES. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo ; Launcelot and I are out : he tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven because I am a Jew's daughter.

LOREN. I think the best grace of wit, will shortly turn into silence ; and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots.—Go in, sirrah ; bid them prepare for dinner.

LAUN. That is done, sir ; they have all stomachs.

LOREN. Goodly lord, what a wit-snapper are you ! then bid them prepare dinner.

LAUN. That is done too, sir ; only, cover is the word.

LOREN. Will you cover then, sir ?

LAUN. Not so, sir, neither ; I know my duty.

LOREN. Yet more quarrelling with occasion ! wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant ? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning : go to thy fellows ; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

LAUN. For the table, sir, it shall be served in for the meat, sir, it shall be covered ; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern.

*Exit, R.*

LOREN. O, dear discretion, how his words are suited !

The fool hath planted in his memory

An army of good words : and I do know

As many fools, that stand in better place,

Garnish'd like him, that for a tricky word

Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica ?

And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,

How dost thou like the lord Bassanio's wife ?

JESS. Past all expressing.

LOREN. Even such a husband

Hast thou of me, as she is for a wife.

JESS. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

*Duet.*—LORENZO and JESSICA.\*

JES. In vows of everlasting truth,  
You waste your idle hours, fond youth;  
But leave me once, and I should find,  
That out of sight were out of mind.

LOREN. Ah! do thyself no wrong, my dear,  
Affect no coy nor jealous fear:  
Each beauteous object, I might see,  
Would but inspire a thought of thee.

JESS. & LOREN. Thus absence warms with fiercer flame,  
The fine affections of the soul;  
As distance points with surer aim,  
The faithful needle to its darling pole.

*Exeunt, R.*

END OF ACT III.

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—*A Court of Justice in Venice.*

*The DUKE, the MAGNIFICOS, C. ; ANTONIO, BASSANIO, L. ;  
SOLANIO, SALARINO, GRATIANO, R., and others discovered.*

DUKE. What is Antonio here?

ANTO. Ready, so please your grace.

DUKE. I am sorry for thee; thou art come to answer  
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch  
Uncapable of pity, void and empty  
From any dram of mercy.

ANTO. I have heard  
Your grace hath taken great pains to qualify  
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,  
And that no lawful means can carry me  
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose  
My patience to his fury; and am arm'd  
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,  
The very tyranny and rage of his.

\* Often omitted.



DUKE. Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

SOLAN. (*going to side*) He's ready at the door ;—he comes,  
my lord.

*Enter SHYLOCK, R.*

DUKE. Make room; and let him stand before our face.

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,  
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice  
To the last hour of act ; and then, 'tis thought,  
Thou'lt show thy mercy, and remorse, more strange  
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty :

And, where thou now enact'st the penalty,  
(Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,)

Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,  
But touched with gentleness and love,  
Forgive a moiety of the principal ;  
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,  
That have of late so huddled on his back ;  
Enough to press a royal merchant down,  
And pluck commiseration of his state  
From brassy bosoms, and rough hearts of flint,  
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd  
To offices of tender courtesy.

We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

SHYLOCK. I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose ;

And by our holy sabbath have I sworn,  
To have the due and forfeit of my bond :

If you deny it, let the danger light

Upon your charter, and your city's freedom.

You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have

A weight of carrion flesh, than to receive

Three thousand ducats :—I'll not answer that :

But say, it is my humour : is it answer'd ?

What if my house be troubled with a rat ;

And I be pleas'd to give ten thousand ducats

To have it ban'd :—what, are you answer'd yet ?

Some men there are, love not a gaping pig ;

Some that are mad if they behold a cat ;

Now for your answer :—

As there is no firm reason to be render'd,

Why he, cannot abide a gaping pig ;

Why he, a harmless necessary cat;  
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,  
More than a lodg'd hate and a certain loathing,  
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus  
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

BASS. (L. C.) This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,  
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

SHYLOCK. I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

BASS. Do all men kill the things they do not love?

SHYLOCK. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

BASS. Every offence is not a hate at first.

SHYLOCK. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee  
twice?

ANTO. (L.) I pray you, think you question with the Jew:

You may as well go stand upon the beach,  
And bid the main flood 'bate his usual height;  
You may as well use question with the wolf,  
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;  
You may as well forbid the mountain pines  
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise,  
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven;  
You may as well—do anything most hard,  
As seek to soften that (than which what's harder?)  
His Jewish heart:—therefore, I do beseech you,  
Make no more offers, use no further means,  
But, with all brief and plain conveniency,  
Let me have judgment, and the Jew his will.

BASS. For thy three thousand ducats here are six.

SHYLOCK. If every ducat in six thousand ducats  
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,  
I would not draw them, I would have my bond.

DUKE. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rend'ring none?

SHYLOCK. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?

You have among you many a purchas'd slave,  
Which, like your asses, and your dogs, and mules  
You use in abject and in slavish parts,  
Because you bought them:—Shall I say to you,  
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs,  
Why sweat they under burdens? let their beds  
Be made as soft as yours, let their palates  
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer,

The slaves are ours :—so do I answer you :  
 The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,  
 Is dearly bought, 'tis mine, and I will have it :  
 If you deny me, fie upon your law !

There is no force in the decrees of Venice :

I stand for judgment : answer ; shall I have it ?

DUKE. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,  
 Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,  
 Whom I have sent for to determine this,  
 Come here to day.

SALAR. (R.) My lord, here stays without  
 A messenger with letters from the doctor,  
 New come from Padua.

DUKE. Bring us the letters—call the messenger.

*Exit SALARINO, R.*

BASS. Good cheer, Antonio ! What, man ? courage yet ;  
 The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,  
 Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

ANTO. I am a tainted wether of the flock,  
 Meetest for death ; the weakest kind of fruit  
 Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me ;  
 You cannot better be employed, Bassanio,  
 Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

*Enter SOLARINO with NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk, R.*

DUKE. Come you from Padua, from Bellario ?

NERIS. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace  
 (*presents a letter.*—SHYLOCK *kneels on one knee, and  
 whets his knife upon the sole of his shoe*)

BASS. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly ?

SHYLOCK. To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there.

GRATI. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,  
 Thou mak'st thy knife keen. Can no prayers pierce  
 thee ?

SHYLOCK. No ; none that thou hast wit enough to make.

GRATI. O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog !

And for thy life let justice be accus'd.  
 Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,  
 To hold opinion with Pythagoras,  
 That souls of animals infuse themselves

Into the trunks of men : thy currish spirit  
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,  
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,  
And, whilst thou, lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam  
Infus'd itself in thee ; for thy desires  
Are wolfish, bloody, starv'd and ravenous.

SHYLOCK. 'Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,  
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud :  
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall  
To cureless ruin.—I stand here for law.

DUKE. This letter from Bellario doth commend  
A young and learned doctor to our court :—  
Where is he?

NERIS. He attendeth here hard by,  
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

DUKE. With all my heart : some three or four of you,  
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.—

*Exeunt GRATIANO and SOLANIO, R.*

Meantime, the court shall hear Bellario's letter.—

(reads)—“Your grace shall understand, that, at the receipt  
of your letter, I am very sick : but in the instant that your  
messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young  
doctor of Rome, his name is Balthazar : I acquainted him  
with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio  
the merchant : we turned o'er many books together ; he is  
furnished with my opinion ; which, bettered with his own  
learning (the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend)  
comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's  
request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years  
be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation ;  
for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I  
leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall  
better publish his commendation.”

You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes ;  
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.—

*Enter PORTIA, dressed like a Doctor of Laws : SOLANIO, and  
GRATIANO, R. PORTIA, advancing to the centre of the  
stage, bows to the Court, and then approaches towards  
the DUKE.*

Give me your hand : Came you from old Bellario ?



**PORTIA** I did, my lord.

**DUKE.** You are welcome : take your place.

Are you acquainted with the difference  
That holds this present question in the court ?

**PORTIA** I am inform'd thoroughly of the cause.

Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew ?

**DUKE.** Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

*(they stand forth—PORTIA in the centre of the stage.)*

**PORTIA** Is your name Shylock ?

**SHYLOCK.** (R. C.) Shylock is my name.

**PORTIA** Of a strange nature is the suit you follow ;

Yet in such rule, that the Venetian law

Cannot impugn you, as you do proceed.

*(to ANTONIO)* You stand within his danger do you not ?

**ANTO.** (L. C.) Ay, so he says.

**PORTIA** Do you confess the bond ?

**ANTO.** I do.

**PORTIA** Then must the Jew be merciful.

**SHYLOCK.** On what compulsion must I ? tell me that.

**PORTIA** The quality of mercy is not strain'd ;

It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven

Upon the place beneath : it is twice bless'd ;

It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes :

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; it becomes

The throned monarch better than his crown :

His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,

The attribute to awe and majesty,

Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings ;

But mercy is above this sceptred sway,

It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,

It is an attribute to God himself ;

And earthly power doth then show likest God's,

When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,

Though justice be thy plea, consider this,—

That, in the course of justice, none of us

Should see salvation ; we do pray for mercy ;

And that same prayer doth teach us all to render

The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much,

To mitigate the justice of thy plea ;

Which, if thou follow, this strict court of Venice

Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

SHYLOCK. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,  
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

PORTIA. Is he not able to discharge the money?

BASS. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;

Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,

I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,

On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:

If this will not suffice, it must appear

That malice bears down truth. And I beseech  
you,

(to the DUKE) Wrest once the law to your authority:

To do a great right do a little wrong;

And curb this cruel devil of his will.

PORTIA. It must not be; there is no power in Venice

Can alter a decree established:

'Twill be recorded for a precedent;

And many an error, by the same example,

Will rush into the state: it cannot be.

SHYLOCK. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!—

O, wise young judge, how do I honour thee!

PORTIA. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

SHYLOCK. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

PORTIA. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

SHYLOCK. An oath, an oath; I have an oath in heaven.

Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?

No, not for Venice.

PORTIA. Why, this bond is forfeit;

And lawfully by this the Jew may claim

A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off

Nearest the merchant's heart:—Be merciful;

Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

SHYLOCK. When it is paid according to the tenour.—

It doth appear, you are a worthy judge;

You know the law; your exposition

Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,

Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,

Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear,

There is no power in the tongue of man

To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

ANTO. Most heartily I do beseech the court

To give the judgment.

PORTIA Why then, thus it is:

You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

SHYLOCK. O, noble judge! O, excellent young man!

PORTIA. For the intent and purpose of the law

Hath full relation to the penalty,

Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

SHYLOCK. 'Tis very true: O, wise and upright judge!

How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

PORTIA. Therefore, lay bare your bosom.

SHYLOCK. Ay, his breast:

So says the bond;—Doth it not, noble judge?—

Nearest his heart; those are the very words.

PORTIA. It is so. Are there balance here, to weigh  
The flesh?

SHYLOCK. I have them ready.

PORTIA. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge

To stop his wounds, lest he should bleed to death.

SHYLOCK. Is it so nominated in the bond?

PORTIA. It is not so express'd; but what of that?

'Twere good you do so much for charity.

SHYLOCK. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

PORTIA. Come, merchant, have you anything to say?

ANTONIO. (L. c.) But little; I am arm'd, and well prepar'd.—

Give me your hand, Bassanio; fare you well!

Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;

For herein Fortune shows herself more kind

Than is her custom: it is still her use,

To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,

To view with hollow eye, and wrinkled brow,

An age of poverty; from which lingering penance

Of such misery doth she cut me off.

Commend me to your honourable wife:

Tell her the process of Antonio's end,

Say, how I lov'd you, speak me fair in death?

And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge

Whether Bassanio had not once a love.

Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,

And he repents not that he pays your debt;

For, if the Jew do cut but deep enough,

I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

ANTONIO. (L.) Antonio, I am married to a wife,

Which is as dear to me as life itself;  
 But life itself, my wife, and all the world,  
 Are not with me esteem'd above thy life;  
 I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all  
 Here to this devil, to deliver you.

GRATI. (R.) I have a wife, whom I protest I love;  
 I would she were in heaven, so she could  
 Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

SHYLOCK. These be the Christian husbands: I have a  
 daughter;

Would any of the stock of Barrabas  
 Had been her husband, rather than a Christian! (*aside*)  
 We trifle time; I pray thee pursue sentence.

PORTIA. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine;  
 The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

SHYLOCK. Most rightful judge!

PORTIA. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast.  
 The law allows it, and the court awards it.

SHYLOCK. Most learned judge!—A sentence; come, pre-  
 pare. (*a general movement of anxiety*)

PORTIA. Tarry a little;—there is something else.—

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood!

The words expressly are "a pound of flesh:"—

Then take thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh

But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed

One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods

Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate

Unto the state of Venice! (*a general expression of joy*)

GRATI. (R.) "O upright judge!"—Mark, Jew! "O learned  
 judge!"

SHYLOCK. Is that the law?

PORTIA. Thyself shall see the act:

For, as thou urgest justice, be assur'd

Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

GRATI. "O learned judge!" Mark, Jew; "a learned judge!"

SHYLOCK. I take this offer then,—pay the bond thrice,

And let the Christian go.

BASS.

Here is the money.

PORTIA. Soft.

The Jew shall have all justice;—soft;—no haste;—  
 He shall have nothing but the penalty.



GRAT. O Jew! "an upright judge"—"a learned judge!"

PORTIA. Therefore, prepare thee to cut off the flesh.

Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less, nor more,  
But just a pound of flesh: if thou tak'st more,  
Or less, than a just pound,—be it but so much  
As makes it light, or heavy, in the substance,  
Or the division of the twentieth part  
Of one poor scruple,—nay, if the scale do turn  
But in the estimation of a hair—

Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

GRAT. "A second Daniel"—a Daniel, Jew!

Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

PORTIA. Why doth the Jew pause? Take thy forfeiture.

HYLOCK. Give me my principal, and let me go.

GRAT. I have it ready for thee: here it is.

PORTIA. He hath refused it in the open court:

He shall have merely justice, and his bond.

GRAT. A "Daniel," still say I—"a second Daniel!"

I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

HYLOCK. Shall I not have barely my principal?

PORTIA. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,

To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

HYLOCK. Why, then the devil give him good of it!

I'll stay no longer question.

PORTIA. Tarry, Jew;

The law hath yet another hold on you.

It is enacted in the laws of Venice,—

If it be proved against an alien,

That by direct or indirect attempts

He seek the life of any citizen,

The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive

Shall seize on half his goods;—the other half

Comes to the privy coffer of the state;

And the offender's life lies in the mercy

Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.

In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st:

For it appears by manifest proceeding,

That, indirectly, and directly too,

Thou hast contriv'd against the very life

Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd

The danger formerly by me rehears'd.

Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the duke.

GRATI. (R.). Beg, that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself  
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,  
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;  
Therefore, thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

DUKE. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit,  
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it.  
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;  
The other half comes to the general state,  
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

~~PORTIA.~~ Aye, for the state; not for Antonio.

SHYLOCK. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that;  
You take my house, when you do take the prop  
That doth sustain my house; you take my life,  
When you do take the means whereby I live.

~~PORTIA.~~ What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

GRATI. A halter gratis; nothing else, for heav'n's sake

ANTO. So please my lord the duke, and all the court,  
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,  
I am content, so he will let me have  
The other half in use, to render it,  
Upon his death, unto the gentleman  
That lately stole his daughter.

Two things provided more,—That, for this favour,  
He presently become a Christian;  
The other, that he do record a gift,  
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,  
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

DUKE. He shall do this; or else I do recant  
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

~~PORTIA.~~ Art thou contented, Jew; what dost thou say?

SHYLOCK. I am content.

~~PORTIA.~~ Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

SHYLOCK. I pray you give me leave to go from hence  
I am not well; send the deed after me  
And I will sign it.

DUKE. Get thee gone, but do it.

(SHYLOCK goes across to R. 1 E. when GRATIANO p  
his sleeve)

GRATI. In christening, thou shalt have two godfathers  
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more  
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

*Exit SHYLOCK, R.*

DUKE. Sir, I entreat you with me home to dinner.

PORTIA. I humbly do desire your grace of pardon.

I must away this night toward Padua;

And it is meet, I presently set forth.

DUKE. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.

Antonio, gratify this gentleman;

For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

*Exeunt DUKE, MAGNIFICOS, and TRAIN, R. 3 E.*

BASS. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend  
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted  
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,  
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,  
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

ANTO. And stand indebted, over and above,  
In love and service to you evermore.

*As this Play is sometimes performed in four acts Dr. Valm's alteration is inserted here, being that usually adopted.*

PORTIA.

Nay, he is well paid,

That is well satisfied; in serving you,

I am well paid.—My lord Bassanio,

Examine well these features;—can you not

Trace some resemblance 'twixt the lineaments

Of the young doctor, and a female form,

Grav'd in the deep recesses of your heart?—

That "Daniel come to judgment" is *(throwing off the Doctor's gown, and discovering herself)* your Portia!

BASS. I'm thunder struck—I dare not trust my eyes!

PORTIA. And, Gratiano; in the clerk, behold

Your lov'd Nerissa!—You are all amaz'd!—

Antonio! I have better news for you

Than you expect. Unseal this letter soon,

There shall you find three of your argosies

Are richly come to harbour suddenly.—

You shall know by what strange accident

I had this letter.

ANTO.

O, angelic Portia!

You sav'd my life; you bless it now with wealth.

For here I read, for certain, that my ships

Are safely come to road!



**PORTIA.** He is well paid that is well satisfied:

And I, delivering you, am satisfied,  
And therein do account myself well paid;  
My mind was never yet more mercenary.  
I pray you, know me, when we meet again;  
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

**BASS.** Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further;  
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,  
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,  
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

**PORTIA.** You press me far, and therefore I will yield.  
Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your sake;  
And, for your love, I'll take this ring from you:—  
Do not draw back your hand; I'll take no more;  
And you in love shall not deny me this.

**BASS.** This ring, good sir,—alas, it is a trifle;  
I will not shame myself to give you this.

**PORTIA.** I will have nothing else but only this;  
And now, methinks, I have a mind to it.

**BASS.** There's more depends on this than on the value.  
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,  
And find it out by proclamation;  
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

**PORTIA.** I see, sir, you are liberal in offers;  
You taught me first to beg; and now, methinks,  
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.

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**BASS.** With such a wife,  
I find the joys of heaven here on earth!

**ANTO.** O, if two gods should play some heav'nly match,  
And on the wager lay two earthly women,  
And Portia one, there must be something else  
Pawn'd with the other; for the poor rude world  
Hath not her fellow!

**PORTIA.** Let these dangers past  
Teach you to scan the chances of this world;  
And to Misfortune deal the courtesies  
Of gentle Mercy and Humanity!

Curtain.

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BASS. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;

And, when she put it on, she made me vow

That I should neither sell, nor give, nor lose it.

~~PORTIA~~ That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.

An' if your wife be not a mad woman,

And know how well I have deserv'd this ring,

She would not hold out enemy for ever,

For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

*Exeunt PORTIA and NERISSA, R. 1 E.*

ANTO. My lord Bassanio, let him have the ring;

Let his deservings, and my love withal,

Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

BASS. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;

Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou canst,

Unto Antonio's house;—away, make haste,

*Exit GRATIANO, R. 1 E.*

Come, you and I will thither presently;

And in the morning early will we both

Fly toward Belmont: Come, Antonio.

*Exeunt R. 1 E.*

~~SCENE II.—Venice. A Street.~~

~~Enter PORTIA and NERISSA, R.~~

~~PORTIA.~~ Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed,

And let him sign it; we'll away to-night,

And be a day before our husbands home:

This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

*Enter GRATIANO, R.*

GRATI. Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en:

My lord Bassanio, upon more advice,

He hath sent you here this ring; and doth entreat

Your company at dinner.

PORTIA. That cannot be:

His ring I do accept most thankfully,

And so, I pray you, tell him: Furthermore,

I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

GRATI. That will I do.

NERIS. Sir, I would speak with you:—*(to PORTIA)*

I'll see if I can get my husband's ring,

Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

PORTIA. (*aside to her*) Thou mayst, I warrant. We shall  
 have old swearing,  
 That they did give the rings away to men;  
 But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.  
 Away, make haste! thou know'st where I will tarry.

— *Exit* PORTIA, L.

NERIS. Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?

*Exeunt*, R. 1 E.

END OF ACT IV.

## ACT V.

SCENE I. Belmont. Avenue to Portia's House.

LORENZO and JESSICA discovered, L. C.

LOREN. The moon shines bright:—In such a night as this,  
 When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,  
 And they did make no noise,—in such a night  
 Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew:  
 And with an unthrift love did run from Venice,  
 As far as Belmont.

JESS. In such a night,  
 Did young Lorenzo swear he lov'd her well;  
 Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,  
 And ne'er a true one.

LOREN. In such a night,  
 Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,  
 Slander her love and he forgave it her.

JESS. I would out-night you, did no body come:  
 But, hark; I hear the footing of a man.

*Enter* STEPHANO, L.

LOREN. Who comes so fast, in silence of the night?

STEPH. A friend—Stephano,—and I bring word,  
 My mistress will, before the break of day,  
 Be here at Belmont.

I pray you is my master yet returned?

LOREN. He is not, nor we have not heard from him.  
 But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,

And ceremoniously let us prepare  
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

*Enter LAUNCELOT, L.*

LAUN. Sola, sola, wo ha, ho, sola, sola!

LOREN. Who calls?

LAUN. Sola! Did you see master Lorenzo, and mistress  
Lorenzo? sola, sola?

LOREN. Leave hollaing, man; Here!

LAUN. Sola!—Where?—Where?

LOREN. Here!

LAUN. Tell him there's a post come from my master,  
with his horn full of good news; my master will be here  
ere morning.

*Exit, R.*

LOREN. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.

And yet, no matter; why should we go in?

My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,

Within the house your mistress is at hand:

And bring your music forth into the air.

*Exit STEPHANO, R.*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!

Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music

Creep in our ears; soft stillness, and the night,

Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven

Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st

But in his motion like an angel sings,

Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:

Such harmony is in immortal souls:

But whilst this muddy vesture of decay

Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*Enter MUSICIANS, R. U. E.*

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn;

With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,

And draw her home with music. (*music*)

*Enter PORTIA and NERISSA in female dresses, L.*

PORTIA. That light we see is burning in my hall.

How far that little candle throws his beams!

So shines a good deed in a naughty world.  
Music, hark!

NERIS. It is your music, madam, of the house.

PORTIA. Nothing is good, I see, without respect;  
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

NERIS. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

PORTIA. How many things by season season'd are  
To their right praise and true perfection!  
Peace, ho!—the moon sleeps with Endymion,  
And would not be awaked! (*music ceases*)

LOREN. That is the voice,  
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.

PORTIA. He knows me, as the blind man knows the cuckoo,  
By the bad voice.

LOREN. Dear lady, welcome home.

PORTIA. We have been praying for our husband's welfare,  
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.  
Are they return'd?

LOREN. Madam, they are not yet;  
But there is come a messenger before,  
To signify their coming.

PORTIA. Give order to my servants, that they take  
No note at all of our being absent hence;  
Nor you Lorenzo:—Jessica, nor you.

(*a trumpet sounds, L. U. E.*)

LOREN. Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet:  
We are no tell-tales, madam, fear you not.

PORTIA. This night, methinks, is but the daylight sick.  
It looks a little paler; 'tis a day  
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

*Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and their FOLLOWERS*  
L. U. E.

You are welcome home, my lord.

BASS. (L. C.) I thank you, madam: give welcome to my  
friend:—

This is the man, this is Antonio,  
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

PORTIA. (C.) You should in all sense be much bound to him,  
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

ANTO. (L.) No more than I am well acquitted of.



**PORTIA** Sir, you are very welcome to our house :

It must appear in other ways than words,  
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

(*GRATIANO and NERISSA have been talking apart, R. U. E.*)

**GRATI.** (R. C.) By yonder moon, I swear you do me wrong;

In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk :  
Would he were hang'd that had it, for my part,  
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.

**PORTIA.** A quarrel, ho, already? what's the matter?

**GRATI.** About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring  
That she did give me; whose poesy was,  
For all the world, like cutler's poetry  
Upon a knife, "Love me and leave me not."

**NERIS.** (R.) What talk you of the poesy or the value?

You swore to me, when I did give it you,  
That you would wear it till the hour of death;  
And that it should lie with you in your grave.  
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,  
You should have been respective, and have kept it.  
Gave it a judge's clerk!—but well I know,  
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

**GRATI.** He will, an if he live to be a man.

**NERIS.** Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

**GRATI.** Now, by this hand I gave it to a youth,—

A kind of boy; a little scrubbed boy,  
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk;  
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee;  
I could not, for my heart, deny it him.

**PORTIA.** You were to blame; I must be plain with you,

To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;  
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger,  
And so rivetted with faith unto your flesh.  
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear  
Never to part with it; and here he stands,—  
I dare be sworn for him, he would not leave it,  
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth  
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,  
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief;  
An 'twere to me I should be mad at it.

**BASS.** (L. C.) Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,  
And swear I lost the ring defending it. (*aside*)

GRATI. My lord Bassanio gave his ring away  
Unto the judge that begg'd it, and, indeed,  
Deserv'd it too; and then the boy, his clerk,  
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine:  
And neither man nor master would take ought  
But the two rings.

PORTIA. What ring gave you, my lord?  
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

BASS. If I could add a lie unto a fault,  
I would deny it; but you see, my finger  
Hath not the ring upon it, it is gone.

PORTIA. Even so void is your false heart of truth.  
~~By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed  
Until I see the ring.~~

NERIS. ~~Nor I in yours,  
Till I again see mine.~~

BASS. Sweet Portia,  
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,  
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,  
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,  
And how unwillingly I left the ring,  
When nought would be accepted but the ring,  
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

PORTIA. If you had known the virtue of the ring,  
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,  
Or your own honour to contain the ring,  
You would not then have parted with the ring.  
What man is there so much unreasonable,  
If you had pleased to have defended it  
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty  
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?  
Nerissa teaches me what to believe;  
I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

BASS. No, by mine honour, madam, by my soul,  
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,  
Who did refuse three thousand ducats of me,  
And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him,  
And suffered him to go displeased away;  
Even he that had held up the very life  
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?  
I was enforc'd to send it after him.

Pardon me, good lady,  
For, by these blessed candles of the night,  
Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd  
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

~~PORTIA~~ Let not that doctor e'er come near my house,  
Since he hath got the jewel that I lov'd,  
And that which you did swear to keep for me.  
I will become as liberal as you;  
~~I'll not deny him anything I have.~~  
Know him I shall, I am well sure of it.  
Lie not a night from home; watch me, like Argus:  
If you do not, if I be left alone,  
Now, by mine honour, which is yet mine own,  
I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.

NERIS. And I his clerk; therefore be well advised,  
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

GRATIA. Well, do you so: let me not take him then;  
~~For, if I do, I'll mar the young-clerk's pen.~~

ANTO. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

~~PORTIA~~ Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.

BASS. ~~Portia~~, forgive me this enforced wrong;  
And, in the hearing of these many friends,  
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes  
Wherein I see myself.

~~PORTIA~~. Mark you but that?  
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself  
In each eye, one:—swear by your double self,  
And there's an oath of credit.

BASS. Nay, but hear me?  
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear,  
~~I never more will break an oath with thee.~~

ANTO. I once did lend my body for his wealth;  
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,  
Had quite miscarried. I dare be bound again,  
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord  
Will never more break faith advisedly.

~~PORTIA~~ Then you shall be his surety: give him this;  
And bid him keep it better than the other.

ANTO. (L. C.) Here, lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.

BASS. (L.) By heaven! it is the same I gave the doctor.



**PORTIA.** I had it of him. Pardon me, Bassanio;  
For by this ring the doctor lay with me.

**NERIS. (R.)** And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano;  
For that same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk,  
In lieu of this last night did lie with me.

**PORTIA.** You are all amaz'd.

Here is a letter; read it at your leisure:

It comes from Padua, from Bellario.

There you shall find, that Portia was the doctor;

Nerissa there, her clerk. Lorenzo here

Shall witness, I set forth as soon as you,

And but e'en now returned: I have not yet

Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome;

And I have better news in store for you

Than you expect. Unseal this letter soon;

There you shall find, three of your argosies  
Are richly come to harbour suddenly:

You shall know by what strange accident

I chanced on this letter.

**ANTO.** Sweet lady, you have given me life, and living;

For here I read for certain, that my ships

Are safely come to road.

**PORTIA.**

How now, Lorenzo?

My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

**NERIS.** Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.—

There do I give to you and Jessica,

From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,

After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.

**LOREN. (R.)** Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way  
Of starved people.

**PORTIA.**

It is almost morning,

And yet, I am sure, you are not satisfied

Of these events at full: Let us go in;

And charge us there upon inter'gatories,

And we will answer all things faithfully.

(*music*)

Curtain.







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